

3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT, SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 Ecology Review

In December of 2002, the Washington Department of Ecology initiated a process to evaluate the suitability of the project's NEPA Final EIS in meeting the environmental review requirements under SEPA. To determine whether the project's existing NEPA EIS could be adopted to meet the requirements of SEPA, Ecology was required to conduct an independent review of the NEPA document.

As a result of that process, Ecology determined that 39 issues in the NEPA Final EIS were not adequately addressed to satisfy SEPA requirements. The list transmitted to GSX-US by Ecology on July 28, 2003, reflected the issues that would need to be addressed in a Supplemental EIS.

For this Supplemental EIS, each of the 39 issues is assigned to a corresponding topic or element of the environment under SEPA. Those issues provide the framework for the environmental analyses in the Supplemental EIS. The topic areas are:

- Project Description (addressed in Chapter 2)
- Geology and Soils
- Surface Water
- Groundwater
- Plants and Animals
- Reliability and Safety
- Land and Shoreline Use
- Socioeconomic Conditions
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Traffic and Transportation
- Air Quality
- Noise

3.1.2 Chapter Organization

Each section of this chapter on affected environment, significant impacts, and mitigation measures is organized in the following manner:

Element of the Environment

The first title that appears at the beginning of each section identifies the element of the environment for which issues have been identified by Ecology for response.

Applicable Sections in FERC Documents

This section lists references to all applicable sections of the FERC Final EIS and supporting documents where the reader may review the original analyses. It also refers the reader to applicable sections of the Environmental Report that accompanied GSX-US's original application to FERC.

Issue Summary

This includes a summary of the issue, followed by Ecology's requirement for how the issue must be addressed in this Supplemental EIS.

Affected Environment

If Ecology's recommendation calls for additional information on existing conditions, that information will be included in this section. Depending on the scope of the response, this section may also include information for the GSX-Canada portion of the project. If Ecology's recommendation does not call for additional information on the affected environment, this section will state, "No additional analysis required."

Impacts

If Ecology's recommendation calls for additional analysis or clarification of potential impacts, that information will be included in this section. Depending on the scope of the response, this section may also include information for the GSX-Canada portion of the project, the Terasen Gas Alternative, and the No Action Alternative. If Ecology's recommendation does not call for additional information on potential environmental impacts, this section will state, "No additional analysis required."

Mitigation Measures

If Ecology's recommendation calls for additional information on measures to mitigate potential environmental impacts, that information will be included in this section. Depending on the scope of the response, this section may also include information for the GSX-Canada portion of the project, the Terasen Gas Alternative, and the No Action Alternative. If Ecology's recommendation does not call for additional information on mitigation measures, this section will state, "No additional analysis required."

Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

If Ecology's recommendation calls for additional analysis or clarification of environmental impacts that could be significant, unavoidable, and adverse as defined under SEPA, that information will be included in this section. Depending on the scope of the response, this section may also include information for the GSX-Canada portion of the project, the Terasen Gas Alternative, and the No Action Alternative. If Ecology's recommendation does not call for additional information on significant, unavoidable, adverse impacts, this section will state, "No additional analysis required."